

CHINATOWN

the winning poem in a recent contest
is a tribute to mulholland
for bringing the water and the people
to the san fernando valley.

the noble realization of a noble dream.

at last we have come to that fork in the tongue
where poems lie
and movies tell the truth.

HAND-IN-HAND IN THE L.A. ARTS VANGUARD

millie herr, who doesn't look like a punk rocker,
but who is as knowledgeable of the l.a. scene
as anyone i know
was telling me about the worst of all punk bands --
let's call them "tommie t. and the tomcats."

what she said about tommie t.'s
combination of ambition and meagre talent
called to mind many self-styled poets i have known,

but my feelings towards tommie warmed considerably
after millie informed me he was the only one in attendance
at the disastrous and purposefully disgusting reading
i had given at the zero-zero club
who had actually enjoyed the stuff i'd read.

the next week she brought me
tommie t.'s first single,
cut on his own label,
and bearing his downey, california, telephone number.
i was sorry tommie hadn't autographed it for me,
preferably across the grooves.
unfortunately i got drunk that night
and, arriving home, i left the record
on the front seat of the car.
the next afternoon, i found it melting like sambo's tigers
in a halo of golden california sun.
by now it's hardened to a shape
reminiscent of a time-warp model.

millie assures me it will sound much better this way.